

Message Text

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ACTION VO-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 CIAE-00 FBIE-00 INSE-00
NSAE-00 L-03 /018 W
-----240543Z 110934 /20

R 231928Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9355
INFO ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO 21

UNCLAS MEXICO 16089

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: VIS
SUBJECT: VISA VALIDITY, BORDER CROSSING CARDS AND RECIPROCITY

REF MEXICO OM, MAR 15, 1976, MEXICO 9127, JULY 16.

1. DISCUSSION OF BORDER CORSSING CARDS AT CONSULAR CONFERENCE RAISES OLD QUESTIONS OF RECIPROCITY. EMBASSY'S POSITION IS AND HAS BEEN THAT GOM LACK OF VISA AND PASSPORT REQUIREMENT FOR U.S. CITIZENS IS FIRM BASIS FOR ISSUANCE OF STATE DEPARTMENT INDEFINITE-VALIDITY DOCUMENT. MEXICAN REQUIREMENT FOR OBTAINING SIX-MONTH VALIDITY TOURIST CARDS APPEARS TO COINCIDE WITH INS I-92 DOCUMENT COUPLED WITH REFUSAL TO EXTEND STAY BEYOND MAXIMUM SIX MONTHS STAY AT ONE TIME ON B-2 VISA.

2. SIMILARLY, LACK OF CONFORMITY BY GOM OFFICIALS IN APPLYING MEXICAN TARIFF OF FEES, AS POINTED OUT IN OM OF MARCH 1, 1976, REQUEST FOR ADVISORY OPINION, RESULTS IN U.S. BUSINESSMEN GENERALLY BEING ADMITTED TO MEXICO WITH GRATIS TOURIST CARD TO CONDUCT BUSINESS WHILE U.S. POSTS CHARGE FEES FOR LIMITED VALIDITY B-1. REF OM SUGGESTED GRATIS B-1S FOR MANY CATEGORIES OF MEXICAN BUSINESSMEN AND OTHERS. ON BALANCE, WE NOW THINK ONE OF FOLLOWING MEASURES SHOULD BE ADOPTED COUNTRY-WIDE. IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE, THESE ARE:

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(A) CREATION OF A NEW, DEPARTMENT OF STATE BORDER CROSSING DOCUMENT SIMILAR TO THAT ISSUED IN CANADA. THIS WOULD BE, IN EFFECT, A B-1/B-2 MULTIPLE ENTRY, INDEFINITE VALIDITY VISA WHICH WOULD BE VALID EVEN IF THE PASSPORT IN WHICH IT IS STAMPED HAS EXPIRED. IF THIS ALTERNATIVE

IS ADOPTED, THE DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY SHOULD URGE INS TO FOREGO REQUIREMENT OF A FORM I-94 AT THE PORT OF ENTRY, AT LEAST FOR TRIPS TO BORDER AREAS, AS THEY DO NOW FOR HOLDERS OF MEXICAN BORDER CROSSING CARDS.

(B) IF THE ABOVE IS NOT POSSIBLE, WE REQUEST THE AUTHORITY TO ISSUE INDEFINITE VALIDITY B-1/B-2 VISAS. IN CASES WHERE A LIMITED B-1 SEEMS ADVISABLE, NO FEE SHOULD BE CHARGED. NATURALLY, ONLY APPLICANTS WHO APPEAR TO BE CLEARLY BONA-FIDE WOULD BE ISSUED INDEFINITE-VALIDITY VISAS. SINCE MEXICAN FEDERAL PASSPORTS ARE VALID FOR A MAXIMUM OF SIX YEARS, THIS WOULD ONLY EXTEND THE MAXIMUM VALIDITY OF A B-2 VISA FOR TWO YEARS.

(C) IF INDEFINITE VALIDITY B-1 VISAS CANNOT BE AUTHORIZED, WE URGE AT LEAST THE AUTHORIZATION OF GRATIS FOUR-YEAR MULTIPLE B-1S.

3. IF (A) OR (B) ABOVE IS APPROVED, WE BELIEVE THAT ALL MEXICAN POSTS SHOULD DISCONTINUE THE ISSUANCE OF FORMS I-186 BORDER CROSSING CARDS. WE FURTHER DISAGREE WITH SUGGESTIONS THAT CONSULAR POSTS SHOULD ASSIST IN THE PREPARATION OF FORMS I-92 FOR INS.

4. PENDING DEPARTMENT'S REPLY, ALL POSTS IN MEXICO WILL CONTINUE THEIR PRESENT POLICIES. AS THERE IS NOW NO COUNTRY-WIDE POLICY ON PROCESSING OR ISSUANCE OF BCC'S, THE DEPARTMENT IS URGED TO RESPOND TO THIS MESSAGE ASAP SO THE EMBASSY AND CONSTITUENT POSTS MAY IMPLEMENT ONE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, VISAS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MEXICO16089
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760472-0001
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761217/aaaaaolw.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION VO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 MEXICO 9127
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 DEC 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <01 Apr 2004 by morefirh, INA>; APPROVED <30 DEC 2004 by morefirh>; RELEASED <30 DEC 2004 by morefirh>; APPROVED <30 DEC 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISA VALIDITY, BORDER CROSSING CARDS AND RECIPROCITY
TAGS: CVIS, US, MX
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006